

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
SUPERINTENDENT
OF THE
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK
TO THE
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

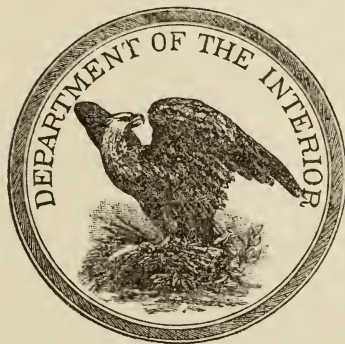
P. H. CONGER,
SUPERINTENDENT.

FOR THE YEAR 1883.



WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.
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HEADQUARTERS YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK,
Mammoth Hot Springs, September 10, 1883.

SIR: In compliance with the requirements of your office I have the honor to submit the following report pertaining to the Yellowstone National Park for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1883. A detailed statement of last summer's business, after the first of July and up to the close of business on the last of October, will be found in my annual report of last year, now in your office, and to which I respectfully refer you for particulars. All kinds of labor and improvements are necessarily suspended in the Park on or about the 1st of November on account of snow and the inclemency of the weather, at which time I settled with and dismissed all employés, except assistant and two men, whom I left in charge of the Government stock and property for the winter. Not deeming it necessary to remain here during the winter I returned to my home in Iowa, thence proceeded to Washington to counsel with you in regard to park management, and to prepare my annual report, which, owing to the press of business, I was unable to furnish at an earlier date. When my business was accomplished which called me to the capital, in compliance with your orders I returned to my post, where I arrived on the 1st of March, 1883, you deeming my presence in the Park necessary that early in the season by reason of reports reaching you of the slaughter of game within the Park. Upon investigating these rumors I ascertained that a few elk and deer had been killed by parties contracting to furnish meat for the hotel company. They were notified that hunting in the Park would not be allowed, and they immediately desisted. Hunting here has been practically suspended ever since, except what may be done by stealth. Indeed, I am glad I can assure you that the reports which reached you last winter relative to the slaughter of game in the Park were greatly exaggerated. On March 1 it was yet winter in this vicinity, and there was little we could do until the latter part of the month, when the weather became mild, and we were able to build a blacksmith shop 16 by 20, with attachment 10 by 16, used as cow house, a storehouse 16 by 37, a carpenter shop 16 by 20. The lumber was kindly furnished us by the hotel company, which had saw-mills running here. With refuse lumber and slabs (which cost us nothing but the hauling) we constructed a large corral, a wagon shed, and harness house; all of these buildings were absolutely requisite—indeed, they were indispensable for the proper care of our supplies and tools. I consider it fortunate for the interests of the Government here

that the hotel company consented to let us have the lumber, as we have no mills anywhere near here, consequently lumber could not be delivered in the Park without costing three times as much as the hotel company charged us for the lumber we used. In justice to this company, it is my duty to inform you that they only charged \$20 per M at their mills. It cost the company that amount per M to get the logs to their mill and manufacture the same. The aforementioned buildings are covered with boards and battened. The roofs are not rain proof, and should be covered with shingles to be tight. This mountain lumber is full of knots, which crack open upon exposure to the sun; consequently, it is impossible to make compact roofs with any boards that can be obtained here. During the construction of these buildings I was also making the necessary preparations to commence the work on the roads. As soon as the snow cleared away and the roads became passable I went to Livingston, Bozeman, and Virginia City, Mont., and purchased one span of mules, harness, and wagon; also, one span of horses, harness, and wagon—the latter for the use of Superintendent—also purchased the necessary supplies and tools to carry on the season's campaign of road-making and bridge-building in the Park. We commenced active operations on the roads in the neighborhood of Mammoth Hot Springs the latter part of May. It was near the middle of June before we could get supplies and men into the Park from Virginia city to the Fire Hole Basin. My object was only to employ sufficient force to consume the unexpended balance of the appropriation applicable to the fiscal year ending June 30, 1883, at which time I understood a new law would take effect, and the expenditures for the construction of roads and bridges in the National Park would thereafter be under the supervision of the War Department. I kept two parties of men at work on the roads, each party about 12 strong, in different parts of the Park, repairing those places which required immediate attention.

At the end of the fiscal year I found, according to my accounts, that I had expended all of the appropriation except \$191.50, which amount still remains in my possession.

My accounts for the fourth quarter of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1883, await the examination and verification of the Treasury Department.

So urgent was the necessity for the improvement of the roads in the Park, and as tourists had already begun to arrive in large numbers, and as I daily expected the arrival of the engineer officer who was to relieve me of the charge of the construction of roads and bridges in the National Park, I still retained my men at work on the roads after the 1st of July. On the 20th of July, 1883, I addressed a letter to you, stating the embarrassment under which I was laboring by reason of the non-arrival of this officer whom I expected to relieve me; and not until the 27th of July did I receive your letter, under date of July 14, informing me of the assignment of an engineer officer to duty here, and advising me of the construction to be placed on the law passed last winter, making the appropriation for the protection, preservation, and improvement of the Yellowstone National Park.

I believe that I have given you a general idea of our operations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1883, and I will now proceed to mention some matters that pertain more especially to the future management of the Park.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS.

The law passed by the last Congress making the appropriation for the Park and creating the ten new officers, called "assistant superin-

tendents," seems to me not to have been well considered, as no provision was made for them except a meager salary, which is inadequate, if these men are required to build their own quarters, furnish their own horses, equipments, and sustenance. To be effective these officers necessarily ought to be stationed at different points throughout the Park, and to be well mounted, suitably uniformed and equipped. With the present force of ten men, I would recommend that they be stationed by twos at five of the most important points in the Park. This disposition of the force will require the erection of five comfortable cabins, as the law requires a permanent residence, and men cannot exist in this mountain country in the winter season without comfortable quarters. At this date, September 12, it will hardly be practicable to construct these buildings this season. Snow and severe weather are expected very soon. As to the operation of the law dividing the responsibility for the protection and improvement of the Park between two Departments of the Government, I am compelled to say that I think the measure unwise.

I need not enter into details in regard to this question, but I think there can be but little doubt that Congress at its next session will choose to have one responsible head for the transaction of business here as elsewhere. It must not be understood that I reflect upon the officer who has been assigned by the Secretary of War for duty here. Lieut. D. C. Kingman is all that I could desire as an officer and gentleman.

By the operation of this law the Superintendent of the Park is left without a dollar for any incidental expenses whatever for the care of these headquarters, no provision for the Government horses and mules, repairs of the buildings and fences, and many other things which I need not enumerate, but which will suggest themselves to the mind of any person familiar with the custody and care of an establishment of this kind. I cannot believe it was the intention of the makers of this law that the Superintendent should be left without the means to protect and preserve the property of the Government intrusted to his care and keeping.

HEADQUARTERS.

The headquarters building or Superintendent's residence is located, in my judgment, injudiciously. It is situated on the pinnacle of a very high and precipitous mound or hill, exposed to the fierce winds that prevail here, especially in the winter. Besides, it is nearly a half mile from water, necessitating the constant employment of a man and team to supply wood, water, and other necessities. My predecessor (Colonel Norris) built the house here a number of years ago. He gave as his reason for locating the headquarters on the hill, that he thought it the best defensive point against Indians. There may have been, and doubtless was at that time, a necessity for such precaution; but that day and necessity have passed. The Indians in this vicinity are no longer to be feared, and, allow me to remark, that I believe the whole Indian question solved and forever disposed of just so far as railroads penetrate our country. Hence other and more economic reasons should govern in selecting a site on which to erect suitable buildings for the use of the Government in this great National Park. The house now occupied is nothing but a log cabin at the best, sadly out of repair, roof leaky, and the force of the winds shakes the plaster out of the cracks between the logs constantly, rendering the house hardly habitable, especially during the cold season. Heretofore these rude cabins were all that were re-

quired, but all is now changed here. We have railroads, the telegraph, and great hotels, with all the crowd, business, and fashion that these wonderful civilizing agencies imply. I respectfully request that this subject be brought soon before Congress. In my next estimate, which I shall forward soon, I have named an amount which I deem necessary for this object.

HOTEL COMPANY.

Messrs. Rufus Hatch & Co. have erected at the Mammoth Hot Springs, in the vicinity of the headquarters, a large and elegant hotel for the accommodation of tourists. The hotel is very commodious and designed to be first class in every particular. The season for travel here was well advanced before the house was near enough completion for the accommodation of guests. It is not yet finished, and workman mingle with visitors through its great halls; the sound of gong that calls one to dinner is deadened by the clatter of the carpenter's hammers upon the walls. There is much dissatisfaction and resentment manifest amongst the people of the Territories, especially amongst those living in the Yellowstone Valley, in the vicinity of the Park, against and with the claims that the "Yellowstone National Park Improvement Company" asserts, to wit, that this company holds the exclusive right and privilege to do all business of whatever kind or character (aside from that which is done by the Government) within the limits of the Park. I have had numerous inquiries to know if this is true, and I have invariably replied that if such was the case I had not been so informed by the Interior Department. The Northern Pacific Railroad Company have constructed a branch railroad from Livingston, Mont. (on their main line), up through the valley of the Yellowstone River to within 8 miles of the Mammoth Hot Springs, from which point Wakefield and Hoffman's excellent stages connect with every train to and from the hotel. This hotel company will doubtless be prepared by next season to furnish first-class accommodation to all who may come at most of the important points in the Park.

LAWS PERTAINING TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PROTECTION OF THE PEOPLE OF THE PARK.

The time has arrived when an imperative necessity demands the attention of Congress to this subject. The people here at this time have no security against any depredation or lawless act against either person or property. And no one understands better than does the vicious and criminal classes our defenseless condition.

The consequences are that this Park is overrun (especially in the summer) with large numbers of men of very doubtful character—a menace not only to the officers and employes of the Park, but also to the life and property of every visitor. It is not my province to recommend the form of government required here, but my duty to call your attention to this important subject, and I trust you will submit to Congress some plan of action to guide and protect us, best suited in your judgment to accomplish the desired end. It has not been the fault of the Secretary of the Interior that good and sufficient rules for the government of the Park have not been made. Nor is it the fault of the Superintendent that the same have not been duly published and promulgated, for all of this has been done. But the trouble is and has been that the Superintendent has not been provided with the necessary

legal machinery nor physical force to compel the obedience to the rules and regulations issued by the Secretary of the Interior for the government of the Park. Cheyenne, Wyo., the seat of government of this Territory, is nearly 1,000 miles from here, and, so far as I am advised, the nearest point to which we can appeal to the civil law for protection. Several men have been shot in the Park this season, and one instantly killed. I notified the Interior office of one shooting that occurred last March near the headquarters. I also gave notice of the commission of the crime to the governor of Wyoming, who replied that he had placed my communication in the hands of the United States district attorney, and requested me to furnish the names of the witnesses, which I promptly did. But in the mean time the culprit escaped, and, so far as I know, has not been apprehended or heard of since.

TOURISTS.

Visitors to the Park this season have been largely in excess of the number of last year, and a very wide distinction in the locality from whence they came. Heretofore the principal number of those visiting the Park came from the Territories and adjacent States, except those from foreign countries, many of whom were scientists, and who had been attracted here long before the savans of our own country had thought it worth their while to inspect the marvelous wonders to be found in the Yellowstone National Park and nowhere else on the globe. But that day of indifference has passed; the Eastern people have heard of the grandeur of the National Park, and the Eastern States have contributed their quota of their most learned and eminent citizens to swell the great multitude that have thronged these mountains the past summer, who have been invigorated by inhaling the pure air, healed by drinking the wonderful waters, and to be inspired to great thoughts and noble deeds by the beautiful and sublime scenery that here surrounds you on every hand. This season an unprecedented number of very distinguished personages have visited the Park—both of our own country and from foreign climes—the most eminent of whom was the President of the United States, accompanied by a member of his cabinet, Hon. Robert Lincoln, Secretary of War, and escorted by the Lieutenant-General of the Army, with his staff officers, and a company of cavalry. We had the distinguished honor and the pleasure, as the representative of the Government here, to welcome the President with his eminent friends and companions to this Park, and to assist them in pitching their camp within the inclosure, immediately in front of these headquarters.

Before the arrival of the Presidential party, came a party hardly less distinguished, viz: The General of the Army, with staff officers and escort of cavalry, accompanied by the Chief Justice of the United States and Associate Justice Gray, of the Supreme bench; also, Vermont's eminent and distinguished Senator, Mr. Edmunds. Close following this party came another of equal importance, led by three United States Senators, from three different and important States in the Union, to wit: Senator Dawes of Massachusetts, Senator Logan of Illinois, and Senator Cameron of Wisconsin. Next, the great States of Kentucky and Missouri were represented by their distinguished and chosen sons, Senator Beck of Kentucky, and Senator Vest of Missouri. Besides these eminent personages, who are now directly connected with the Government, many others visited this "wonderland," whose names are as familiar as household words with the people of our country, both for

their distinguished ability and no less distinguished public service, a few of whom I will name: Hon. Roscoe Conkling, New York; Hon. George S. Boutwell, Massachusetts; Hon. Edwards Pierrepont, New York; Hon. George C. Gorham, Washington, D. C.; Governor Crosby, of Montana; Hon. Morton E. Post, Wyoming.

In conclusion, Mr. Secretary, of this brief report I append a few of the names of the more prominent persons who have visited the Park this season, and who called at headquarters and subscribed their names on our register:

JUNE.

Dr. Max Siring, Germany; E. G. Taber, New Bedford, Mass.; Otto Dentsh, Dr. G. L. Gates, John Castle, and Henry Castle, Milwaukee, Wis.; Ralph Sailey, Dakota; James B. Williams, John Herrimen, and J. A. Baker, New York City; Waton Ferguson, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Charles Brayton, Cleveland, Ohio; J. H. Ames, Saint Paul, Minn.; J. E. Neal, San Francisco, Cal.; J. Hilton Scribner, New York; Hon. F. Jacobs, Delhi, N. Y.; W. F. Spalding, Binghamton, N. Y.; Frank Sibley, Norwich, N. Y.; Rev. S. E. Winger, Helena, Mont.; A. O. Linsley, A. P. Poney, F. Mix, and H. Hughitt, jr., Chicago, Ill.; Miss Nellie Blaire, Lancaster, Ohio; Miss A. Pease, and Walter Ayrault, Geneva, N. Y.

JULY.

General W. T. Sherman, United States Army; Chief Justice Waite, Associate Justice Gray, and United States Senator Edmunds, Vermont; General A. H. Terry, Colonel Hughes, Lieutenant Arthur, and Col. J. C. Tidball, United States Army; Major Gregg, of Fort Ellis, Mont. (commanding escort of 43 cavalry); Henry Anderson, Minnesota; George B. Bailey, San Francisco, Cal.; Louis Shaw, Philadelphia; T. Ward, Butte City, Mont.; George Sands and sons, Capron, Ill.; Col. P. W. Norris, ex-Superintendent National Park, Michigan; Hon. R. Elwood and wife, Sycamore, Ill.; J. L. Elwood and wife, De Kalb, Ill.; Robert McKnight, Miss Flora McKnight, and Robert McKnight, jr., Pittsburgh, Pa.; Hon. Alfred C. Coxe, Utica, N. Y.; Hon. Timothy Griffith, New York; T. McF. Patten, Salem, Oreg.

AUGUST.

A. F. Townsend, Chicago, Ill.; R. C. Moore and wife, Associated Press, Minnesota; A. W. Brayton, M. D., Indianapolis, Ind.

Mr. John Renshaw and party arrived August 6, commissioned by the Government to make a topographical survey of the Park, and on the 8th instant Mr. Arnold Hague arrived with his party, having like authority to make a geological examination of the same.

Miss Kate Dunn Dewey, Milwaukee, Wis.; Mrs. Charles W. Burne, Mrs. Alfred H. Anderson, and Charles W. Brown, La Crosse, Wis.; Paul Selby, Springfield, Ill.; Hon. Martin I. Townsend, Troy, N. Y., accompanied by three youths; E. L. Cole and wife, Grand Rapids, Mich.; George Armitage and wife, Monroe, Mich.; Rev. W. Atterberry, N. Y. City; W. W. Atterberry, Detroit, Mich.; Miss L. P. Chapin, Miss L. Griswold, Miss Florence E. Clough, and Col. J. B. Clough and wife, Minneapolis; M. D. Kneeland, Fredonia, N. Y.; Stella Kneeland, Syracuse, N. Y.; C. A. O. McClellan and James I. Best, Waterloo, Ind.; Hon. B. F. Gue, Des Moines, Iowa; T. M. Ferry, Benton Harbor, Mich.; G. W. Bassett and I. N. Moore, Fort Dodge, Iowa; H. B. Allen and wife, G. Conger and wife, and Emmons Johnson, Waterloo, Iowa.

Heidelberg, Germany; Mrs. Von Eisendecker and Madame Bonny,
Washington, D. C.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. H. CONGER,

Superintendent Yellowstone National Park.

Hon. H. M. TELLER,

Secretary of the Interior.

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